Ready for Kindergarten

Community Care Fund 2019

Triangle Children's Association

123 Main St
Raleigh, NC 12345
director@tca.org
O: 919-123-4567

Ms. Grant Writer

Box 104352
123 Main St.
Raleigh, NC 12345
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Application Form

Organization Information

We strive to make the Community Care Fund accessible to non-profits of all shapes and sizes across the Triangle. Please help us learn about the leadership, size, service area and age of the organizations that apply to the Community Care Fund.

Organization Name*

Triangle Children’s Association

Organization Mission and History*

Please provide the mission statement and a brief history of your organization.

Triangle Children’s Association (TCA) was founded in 1996 by a group of parents and educators in Wake County who needed affordable, high-quality child care for their own families. In 1996, TCA opened its first co-op preschool location in Wake County, closely followed by the opening of a second Wake County location in 2001 and the Durham County location in 2008.

TCA was created on the premise that quality child care is essential to the healthy development of children, particularly in the school readiness of low-income children. The mission of TCA is to prepare children socially, emotionally, and academically for kindergarten and beyond by developing and supporting the implementation of evidence-based preschool programs across the Greater Triangle. By providing greater access to a variety of developmentally appropriate, high-quality programming for parents and young children, TCA seeks to address critical issues that adversely affect a child’s school readiness.

Year Organization Founded

What year was your organization established as a 501c3?

1996

Operating Budget*

What is your organization’s total fiscal budget?

$157,000.00

Organization Counties Served*

What county or counties does your organization serve?

Durham
Orange
Wake
If other, please list below:

none

Do your organization's key leadership staff and board members identify as people of color, LGBTQ, or women? For each identifying statement, please give a percentage.

**Total number of board members:**

15

**% of our board members identify as people of color:**

30

**% of our board members identify as LGBTQ:**

13

**% of our board members identify as female:**

60

**Total number of key leadership staff:**

Key leadership staff members are defined as directors that control and direct people/funding/resources in accordance with your mission.

7

**% of our key leadership staff identify as people of color:**

42

**% of our key leadership staff identify as LGBTQ:**

14

**% of our key leadership staff identify as female:**

71

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**Project Information**

**Project Name**

Ready for Kindergarten

**Amount Requested**

Please indicate the amount of funding you are requesting. The maximum award amount is $5,000.

$5,000.00

**Funding Request**

Please briefly describe what specific expenses a grant from the Community Care Fund would cover and how those expenses support your project goals.

If you are requesting salary support, please describe who the staff are, why they are essential to the project, and why grant funding supports their salary.

A grant would pave the way for the successful implementation and evaluation of our “Ready for Kindergarten” program, including a research-based curriculum for two classrooms (30 students total), four parent engagement events, and provide funding for program coordination. Currently, the program operates in one Durham location, The Center for Learning. With funding, TCA can provide summer programming for two classrooms at a new partnership community center, The Children’s Center (TCC). TCC is located in Northeastern Durham, an area with extremely limited access to affordable, high-quality summer enrichment...
activities for young children and parent support programs. Grant funds would allow us to host and provide printed materials (in English and Spanish) for four parent engagement programs on positive parenting strategies, the power of language and a literacy-rich environment, how to create a math-rich home environment, and navigating the school system. The grant would fund a portion of our Site Coordinator’s time (20 hours/week for 8 weeks at $25/hour) to support partnerships at both Durham sites, oversee program implementation, and conduct program evaluation. The Site Coordinator we have in mind is a licensed childcare provider with 10 years of experience who has agreed to volunteer some of her time (5-10 hours/week) and use the experience as part of her Master’s in Education thesis. The Site Coordinator grew up in Durham and speaks Spanish and English.

**Project Budget**

Using the instructions included on the budget form, please complete the project budget and budget narrative and upload the Excel file below. Budgets submitted in other formats will not be considered.

In the space below, please list the other funding sources for this project and whether they are confirmed or pending.

- **SunTrust** - $10,000 (Confirmed)
- **Triangle County Government** - $2,500 (Confirmed)
- **Federal Grant** - $3,300 (Confirmed)
- **Association of North Carolina Childcare Centers** - $1,000 (Pending)
- **Triangle Children’s Association annual fundraiser** - $3,000 (Pending)

**Project Timeline**

Provide a monthly timeline of the development, implementation, and evaluation of your project. Community Care Fund grants are awarded in early November, and grants cannot fund retroactive expenses or projects.

- This project will take place in summer 2019.
- **January 2019** – Hire Site Coordinator. Confirm the two community partner sites and begin student recruitment.
- **February 2019** – Enrollment deadline is February 20. Confirm enrolled students and recruit additional students, if needed, to reach recruitment goal of 30 total students.
- **March-April** – Recruit and train two lead teachers and two assistant teachers.
- **May** – Purchase materials for classrooms. Hold orientation meeting for families. Conduct first student assessment.
- **June** – Begin program at both sites. Conduct mid-point student assessment.
- **July** – Conduct final student assessment. Hold family event to celebrate program completion. Analyze program and student evaluation data and prepare report.
- **August** – Finalize and share program report with stakeholders.

**Project Theme Area**

Please choose the theme area that best suits your project. A detailed description of each theme is available on our website.

For proposals that serve participants in both the Child Development & Education and the Young Adult Empowerment & Education theme areas, we strongly recommend you choose one of those age ranges and focus your proposal and funding request on just those participants.

- **Child Development & Education (birth to middle school)**

**Project Fit**

Describe how your project goals and activities are aligned with the Community Care Fund theme you are applying under.

TCA will provide summer enrichment and learning activities to young children and families at our two Durham program locations, with a goal of providing all services and materials free of charge. TCA’s goal for the Ready for Kindergarten program is to increase access to quality programming prior to kindergarten as
well as to make improvements to the learning gap that research shows traditionally occurs over summer months. TCA recognizes the importance of quality early childhood education for all children with an understanding that not all children have equal access to programs. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the average cost of child care in Durham greatly exceeds the federal benchmark of 7 percent of a family’s income. By eliminating costs for these two summer programs, TCA seeks to bridge the kindergarten readiness gap.

TCA’s Ready for Kindergarten program will seek to enroll 30 rising kindergartners from Northeast Durham in 10 half-days of enrichment and learning activities. Based on the demographics of this target area, we expect more than half of students to be from households where families earn 80% or less of the Average Median Income. Studies have shown that high-quality pre-kindergarten programs can create an improved learning environment and increase children’s school readiness regardless of their poverty level.

**Counties Project Serves***
Which county or counties will be served with a grant from the Community Care Fund?

Durham

**Population To Be Served***
Please describe the people or communities you plan to serve with a grant from the Community Care Fund.

Does the project serve marginalized people? (Ex. People with physical or mental disability, low socioeconomic status, immigrants, people of color, women, LGBTQ)

The Children’s Center was established in 2004 and the Center for Learning in 2009 to address a wide range of challenges that impact the ability of children in Durham to be successful at school and in life. The Children’s Center identified a geographic area, based on a community risk factor assessment conducted by a leading health advocacy and research group in 2000. The report documented educational, health, safety, environmental and socio-economic challenges for residents in Durham, and identified the area as being one of the most distressed in the city. Both the Center for Learning and The Children’s Center are located in Northeast Durham.

The Ready for Kindergarten program will serve 30 rising kindergarten students who live in the aforementioned target area. Our recruitment goal is for half of the students to be from families that earn 40% or less of the Average Median Income (AMI) and half from families that earn 80% or less of AMI. Based on the demographics of the recruitment area, we expect that 95% of students who are enrolled in our program will identify as African American, Latinx, or multi-racial.

**Number of People To Be Served***
How many people will your project directly serve or benefit?

If applicable, how many people will your project indirectly serve or benefit?

The Ready for Kindergarten program will serve 30 students and their caregivers (about 25 adults), and we will train two lead teachers and two assistant teachers who will implement the curriculum.

**Project Need & Activities**

**Project Need***
Describe the unmet community need your project addresses. In other words, why is your project needed?

Research demonstrates that economically disadvantaged students with little preschool experience are more likely to enter school behind their more economically advantaged peers, and that the gap only grows over time. These students are more likely to face academic and behavioral challenges, and they are more likely to drop out of school. Reaching these children before they enter kindergarten is critical.

According to 2010 census data, there are approximately 700 children below the age of four living in the
neighborhoods around The Center for Learning and The Children’s Center. The percentage of children ages 0 to 4 is higher in this area than in most other areas of the city. Key indicators of distress in this community include a 42% adult poverty rate, 58% child poverty rate, high rates of crime and unemployment, and low rates of homeownership. More than 54% of residents receive public assistance.

More than 400 children currently attend The Center for Learning’s and The Children’s Center’s after-school and enrichment programming. Approximately 50% of The Center for Learning students are African American and 46% are Latinx. More than 97% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and 47% of students are overweight or obese. Only 19% of third graders were performing at or above grade level in reading in 2006.

Ready for Kindergarten addresses the pillars of school readiness as identified by the K-3 North Carolina Policy and Action Coalition: approaches to learning, cognitive development, emotional-social development, health and physical development, and language development and communication.

In addition, our programs seek to engage parents in the learning process, acknowledging that they are their children’s first and best teachers. Parents living in poverty lack both resources and support and face disproportionate burdens, even while they strongly value school readiness and believe that their child should develop specific skills before entering school. TCA seeks to address many parental barriers through the Ready for Kindergarten program, including providing access to high-quality, free summer programming for their child, helping parents understand what their child needs to know for kindergarten, presenting on how best to support learning at home, and supplying information on district and community resources that are available to them at no or low cost.

**Project Activities*  
Describe the key project activities.

TCA’s Ready for Kindergarten initiative will concentrate on three key project activities: implementing research-based enrichment activities for rising kindergarteners in two classrooms (a total of 30 students), four parent engagement events, and three evaluations (pre, mid-point, post).

TCA in collaboration with The Center for Learning and The Children’s Center will host two Ready for Kindergarten programs at the centers over ten half-days (8:30am-12:30pm) in June. A lead teacher and an assistant teacher at each location will incorporate classroom and school routines into their daily teaching: teach literacy and math and utilize the research-based curriculum, which builds critical social, school-readiness, and self-regulatory skills that can help young children achieve more and get along with others. Children will receive breakfast, lunch, and if needed, transportation each day.

Ready for Kindergarten centers will host four 1-hour parent engagement events at each location. Events will include 1) program orientation, during which parents learn about the structure of the program and the curriculum, 2) a parent-centered workshop focusing on positive parenting strategies, how they can support learning at home and what to expect in kindergarten, and 3) a workshop open to the other parents at both centers about navigating the school system, including information on understanding what services are available in the district, advice on what school policies may impact their child, how to be an advocate for their child, and what expectations schools have for parents to encourage their child’s learning at home. 4) On the final day of the program, each center will host an end-of-program event for families to celebrate what their students learned over the summer. To ensure inclusivity of all families, interpretation, child care and food are provided during each event.

The site coordinators will support partnerships at both Durham program sites, oversee the implementation of the programming, and conduct pre-, mid-point and post-program evaluations.

**Project Alignment With Organization’s Mission*  
How is this project aligned with your organization’s mission? If the project isn’t directly aligned, please explain why your organization is proposing this project.
The mission of TCA is to prepare children socially, emotionally, and academically for kindergarten and beyond by developing and supporting the implementation of evidence-based preschool programs across the Greater Triangle. TCA seeks to address critical issues that adversely affect a child’s school readiness.

TCA’s signature summer program, Ready for Kindergarten, will provide free or low-cost high-quality, developmentally appropriate programming for parents and young children at our two proposed Durham locations. The programming has proven to boost students’ self-regulatory, social, and cognitive skills and better prepare rising kindergarteners for elementary school.

Parent programs will center on addressing barriers to parental involvement, including lack of financial and educational resources, limited education levels or instructional confidence, and lack of understanding or comfort with their child’s school and curriculum standards. Ready for Kindergarten, through parent workshops, will help parents understand what their child needs to know for kindergarten and, how best to support learning at home, supply information on district and community resources that are available to them at no or low cost.

**Participant Engagement**

How will you attract and enroll participants?

Beginning in January 2019, the Site Coordinator and staff at both centers will personally reach out to families with rising kindergartners. We will give first enrollment priority to families that earn 40% or less of the Average Median Income (AMI) and second priority to families at 80% or less of AMI. Outreach materials (flyers and brochures) in Spanish and English will be distributed to all priority families. If spaces are still open two weeks before our deadline, open enrollment will begin for anyone who is interested. We will fill spaces on a first-come, first-served basis with priority given to students with little or no pre-kindergarten experience. We ask families about their preferred method of communication and what language is spoken at home. Our team uses a range of messaging and social media to share information about program activities and events.

**Best Practices**

If applicable, describe any practices based on previous successes or research-or evidence-based strategies that will be used in your project.

The Ready for Kindergarten program uses evidence-based curriculum and strong community relationships to prepare students and families for their school. Several independent studies have shown the program to be effective in reducing aggression and increasing pro-social behaviors. The studies concluded that children who participated in the programs had an easier time transitioning to kindergarten than those who did not participate in the program. By connecting Ready for Kindergarten families to staff at both Centers, the program helps to build trust and form relationships that bolster the long-term success of students served. That network of support helps to address some of the challenges of poverty, unemployment and disconnection faced by many families in our program area.

In 2017, Triangle Children’s Association's own pre- and post-program evaluations found that the number of participants proficient in motor skills, self-regulation, social expression and kindergarten academics increased by 51 percentage points. Of the 75% of parents who completed a post-program survey, 100% reported that they felt welcome at the centers, comfortable talking to teachers, and more confident supporting their child’s education at school and at home.

**Project Goals & Evaluation**

**Outcomes**

What results do you expect to see from your activities this year? Please describe how your expected results will help you achieve your long-term goals.

We anticipate a range of highly positive outcomes that will result from children and parents attending the Ready for Kindergarten programs. At the end of the program, children should be better prepared socially,
emotionally, and academically for kindergarten. The programming has been proven to enhance literacy, math, self-regulatory, critical social, and cognitive skills.

Following parent programs, caregivers will have a better understanding of positive family engagement, school readiness, pathways to academic success, and be comfortable with navigating educational resources in the community. We hope parents come away with a better understanding of policies that impact their child, how to be an advocate for their child, as well as feel welcome at each center and more confident supporting their child’s education at school and at home.

**Project Implementation Evaluation**

How will you define your success? What evaluation methods and specific metrics will you use to measure the success of your project?

Progress toward meeting our objectives will be assessed through an ongoing curriculum and program evaluation process that will include teacher, student, and parent pre-program, mid-point, and post-program assessments. Teachers will write daily classroom observations, anecdotal notes, and complete curriculum checklists for each child. Our evaluation strategies are designed to balance quality with ease of administration and cost.

Pre-program surveys and mid-point assessments will drive instruction, ensuring curriculum is aligned with students’ needs and program objectives. This kind of evaluation will allow each classroom to accommodate for the uniqueness of participants, making curriculum more fluid and individualized.

Ready for Kindergarten is designed to reflect the needs of the schools and students it serves. We collect satisfaction data from families via paper surveys at the end of the program, and we conduct a focus group with the classroom teachers to reflect on the successes and challenges. The Site Coordinator collects and reviews survey data and will recommend changes and improvements for the following year.

Specific, measured objectives:

- By the end of the program, at least 90% of the children will have shown mastery of skills on the Ready for Kindergarten Indicator Checklist (copies of the list are available upon request).
- Each child will be able to demonstrate at least two strategies of self-regulation or controlling their emotions and resisting impulsive behavior.
- At least 25 parents will attend our two program-parent workshops and at least 50 parents will attend our navigating the school system workshop.
- 100% of parents will report feeling welcome at the centers and comfortable talking to teachers, and more confident supporting their child’s education at school and at home.
- At least 75% of parents will report they have a better understanding of policies that impact their child and how to be an advocate for their child.

**Volunteers & Partnerships**

**Volunteers**

If applicable, describe the role volunteers play in this project. Please indicate if Duke employees or students volunteer with this project.

Volunteers are recruited to help with administrative tasks, parent workshops, and support teachers in the classroom. Volunteers may instruct or supervise social and developmental activities, document skill mastery, help children with personal care needs, and distribute meals. Volunteers must have experience working with young children (4-6yrs) and interest pursuing or have a degree in early childhood education. We welcome Duke employees or students to apply.

**Partnerships, Collaborations, Coordination**

Please list any organizations you are partnering, collaborating or coordinating with and briefly describe their role with this project. If no partnerships exist, please explain why or explain why this question does not pertain to your
Triangle Children’s Association partners with several groups each summer. While Triangle Children’s Association funds Ready for Kindergarten, manages the Site Coordinator, and trains and supports classroom teachers and staff on the Ready for Kindergarten curriculum, The Children’s Center and The Center for Learning’s teachers handle all direct program implementation with children and families. TCA also relies heavily on the partner centers for family recruitment and program evaluation.

The Center for Learning and The Children’s Center: Agreed to host the program at their locations at no cost to TCA, allowing teachers to use their classrooms, materials and building resources. The office staff and administrators at each facility play a crucial role in participant recruitment by informing kindergarten families about the opportunity as they enter the school to register for kindergarten.

County Public Schools: Offers free breakfast and lunch to participating Ready for Kindergarten students. They allow TCA to contract with its transportation department to offer bus service for all participating students living in the target area.

The Health Advocacy Group: Staff teachers use DVDs, puppets, special activities, games and books to teach friendship skills, emotion language, problem solving, or anger management to the students at a one-time class. The lesson’s topic is chosen by their staff with input from the Ready for Kindergarten teachers and Site Coordinator.

County Library: Library staff read stories to the Ready for Kindergarten students and engage the students through age-appropriate activities. Ready for Kindergarten students enjoy these activities that foster a love of reading and learning in the students.

Big Box Supercenter: A Big Box Supercenter store donated school supplies and funding, which allowed TCA to purchase backpacks for all of the students and provide the teachers with highly desired materials.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT BUDGET

1) Under the **PROJECT EXPENSES** heading, list each expense related to your project budget.
   - Please only list expenses associated with your project funding request. We do not need your organization's total budget.

2) Refer to the **SOURCE OF FUNDING** heading and input the dollar amount(s) related to your expense(s) under the appropriate funding source (requested from CCF, other source, in-kind).

3) When complete, click the **BUDGET NARRATIVE** tab where you will describe how your CCF line item expenses help you meet your project's goals.
   - A budget narrative is *REQUIRED* for your proposal to be considered.

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<th>Project Expenses</th>
<th>Requested from CCF</th>
<th>Other Source ($)</th>
<th>In-kind ($ value)</th>
<th>Total Cost calculated</th>
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<td>$500.00</td>
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<td>Student Backpacks and Gifts</td>
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Totals: $5,000.00 $18,559.00 $0.00 $23,559.00
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<tr>
<th>Expense (auto populated)</th>
<th>Amount requested from CCF (auto populated)</th>
<th>Describe expenses (highlighted in yellow) that would be supported by a Community Care Fund grant.</th>
<th>Explain how expenses supported by a Community Care Fund grant would help you reach your project’s goals.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>Student Transportation</td>
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<td>Site Coordinator (1)</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
<td>The Site Coordinator works (20 hours/week for 8 weeks at $25/hour) to develop partnerships with two program sites, oversee the implementation of the program, and conduct program evaluation. The Site Coordinator is a licensed childcare provider with 10 years of experience who is volunteering some of her time and using the experience as part of her Masters in Education thesis.</td>
<td>The Site Coordinator plays a key role in the success of the project. She/he establishes partnerships with the community hosts, trains the site teachers, and oversees the program evaluation and reporting.</td>
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<td>Classroom and Office Supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Engagement Events &amp; Materials</td>
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<td>Workshop materials and food; interpretation services; childcare staff compensation for three events</td>
<td>We’ve found that providing food, child care and interpretation increases parent turn-out at events. By helping parents feel comfortable in the school setting, and by giving them the tools and information they need to help their child learn and to advocate on behalf of their child, the program helps to ensure the long-term success of program participants and their siblings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Backpacks and Gifts</td>
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<td>Research-based Curriculum</td>
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<td>We will purchase two licenses for the “Get Ready for K!” research-based curriculum. The curriculum is used at pre-k sites throughout the East Coast and incorporates best practices for engaging parents. The curriculum will be gifted to the two sites at the end of the program for future use.</td>
<td>Using a research-based curriculum ensures effective content is available for the teachers to deliver to the students.</td>
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